

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

1. Agency/Subagency originating request	2. OMB control number b. <input type="checkbox"/> None a. _____ - _____
3. Type of information collection (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> New Collection b. <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of a currently approved collection c. <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of a currently approved collection d. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired e. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired f. <input type="checkbox"/> Existing collection in use without an OMB control number For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions	4. Type of review requested (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Regular submission b. <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency - Approval requested by _____ / _____ / _____ c. <input type="checkbox"/> Delegated 5. Small entities Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No 6. Requested expiration date a. <input type="checkbox"/> Three years from approval date b. <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify: _____ / _____
7. Title	
8. Agency form number(s) (<i>if applicable</i>)	
9. Keywords	
10. Abstract	
11. Affected public (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals or households d. <input type="checkbox"/> Farms b. <input type="checkbox"/> Business or other for-profit e. <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Government c. <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-profit institutions f. <input type="checkbox"/> State, Local or Tribal Government	12. Obligation to respond (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary b. <input type="checkbox"/> Required to obtain or retain benefits c. <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory
13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden a. Number of respondents _____ b. Total annual responses _____ 1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically _____ % c. Total annual hours requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____	14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (<i>in thousands of dollars</i>) a. Total annualized capital/startup costs _____ b. Total annual costs (O&M) _____ c. Total annualized cost requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____
15. Purpose of information collection (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Application for benefits e. <input type="checkbox"/> Program planning or management b. <input type="checkbox"/> Program evaluation f. <input type="checkbox"/> Research c. <input type="checkbox"/> General purpose statistics g. <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory or compliance d. <input type="checkbox"/> Audit	16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (<i>check all that apply</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Recordkeeping b. <input type="checkbox"/> Third party disclosure c. <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting 1. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasion 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annually 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Annually 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Biennially 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____
17. Statistical methods Does this information collection employ statistical methods <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission) Name: _____ Phone: _____

19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

- (a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;
- (b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;
- (c) It reduces burden on small entities;
- (d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;
- (e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;
- (f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;
- (g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):
 - (i) Why the information is being collected;
 - (ii) Use of information;
 - (iii) Burden estimate;
 - (iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);
 - (v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - (vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;
- (h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);
- (i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and
- (j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee

Date

Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator or head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or Staff Office)	
Signature	Date
Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer	
Signature	Date

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO OMB-83I
RENEWAL/REVISION OF COLLECTION OF INFORMATION
BLUEFIN TUNA MANDATORY CATCH REPORTING**

1. Need for the Information

This Supporting Statement is submitted as part of a Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) request to renew and revise a current information collection that was approved under OMB control #0648-0328. The collection consists of a mandatory catch reporting program in the recreational fishery for Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT). Currently, anglers harvesting BFT report through an automated phone system (1-888-872-8862) or an internet site administered by AppNet, Inc. under contract to NMFS. The currently approved collection also includes the North Carolina BFT landing card program which is administered by the state and replaces the telephone/internet report. In 1999, the State of Maryland implemented a BFT landing card program as a state regulation, therefore NMFS for the 1999 fishing season, NMFS exempted MD anglers from the federal BFT reporting requirement. As part of this renewal, the mandatory BFT catch reporting would be extended to include landing card programs administered by the states, though it is not likely that all states will adopt cards.

The purpose of this collection of information is to comply with the United States' obligations under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975 (ATCA; 16 U.S.C. 971), and its implementing regulations at 50 CFR part 635. ATCA requires the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). As a member nation of ICCAT, the United States is required to take part in the collection of biological statistics for research purposes. In addition to this requirement, the United States, as one of the three member nations fishing for BFT in the Western Atlantic Ocean, must abide by the specific quota assigned to it by ICCAT. As the BFT fishery is also managed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) it is subject to restrictive catch quotas with the goal of recovering the western Atlantic BFT stock to a level commensurate with maximum sustainable yield.

Collection of information through mandatory catch reporting provides current information on the vessel owners participating in the Atlantic tuna fisheries, thus facilitating the quota monitoring necessary to avoid exceeding the country quota and it aids NMFS in the enforcement of fishery regulations. Angler catch reporting provides essential information for management of the Atlantic tuna fishery in the United States, particularly in terms of allocation decisions which follow ICCAT and MSFCMA recommendations (allocate fishing opportunities consistent with traditional fishing patterns and considering the economic values to various user groups).

Section 971 d.(c)(3) of the ATCA provides the statutory authority to require the collection of information necessary to implement the recommendations of ICCAT. Current fishery data collection programs for the recreational tuna fishery include the Large Pelagics Fishing Survey (LPS), a dockside and telephone survey for catch and effort by permit holders, including number of trips taken and BFT harvested or released. LPS information is valuable for long-term research and stock assessment but does not provide information on a real-time basis, as needed to monitor

catch relative to established quotas. Real-time catch information for the recreational fishery is currently obtained via an automated phone system or interactive web site whereby anglers must report BFT catch within 24 hours of landing. Alternatively, the state programs (currently MD and NC) require that a landing card be completed in exchange for a tag which must be affixed to the fish before it is removed from the vessel. The mandatory BFT landings reporting program provides a landings census and real-time feedback of cumulative landings to industry members who wish to optimize their fishing opportunities.

2. Uses and Users of the Information

This information is used by NMFS to monitor participation and catch in the BFT fisheries, thereby ensuring that the United States complies with its international obligations to ICCAT to keep catches within assigned quotas and to collect information needed for stock assessments. In addition, the mandatory reporting provides essential information for domestic management policy and rule making.

For the North Carolina and Maryland catch card programs, all BFT harvested in the recreational fishery need to have a harvest tag attached prior to removal from the vessel. To obtain a harvest tag, captains or operators of permitted vessels are required to complete a catch card to be submitted at a BFT reporting station in exchange for a harvest tag.

The information collected under telephone, Internet or catch card reporting includes:

- (1) Date of landing
- (2) Landing tag number (if a catch card)
- (3) Atlantic Tunas permit number
- (4) Vessel name and type (Private/Charter/Headboat)
- (5) Curved Fork Length of each BFT landed

The BFT reporting systems are administered by AppNet, Inc. (telephone and website), North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries staff, or Maryland Department of Resources Staff. A few of the data elements are automatically calculated for people using the Internet site, reducing their data entry.

The States provide NMFS with each catch card along with a summary report on a weekly basis, and a final report summarizing all bluefin tuna data collected at the end of the fishing year. The weekly reports for the tagging programs are produced by state personnel for distribution to local contacts in the fishing industry to provide an update on locations of fishing activity and cumulative landings. This report is also mailed to NMFS together with the catch cards to provide a quick update on cumulative catch and a cross check on the number of cards to be entered into NMFS BFT landings database. The final report generated by the states also provides an annual cross check on landing cards completed and, in addition, provides an accounting of tags issued and unused tags returned by reporting stations.

If this information collection were not conducted, the United States would continue to have difficulty in complying with international obligations under ICCAT, possibly resulting in violations of ICCAT catch recommendations. (ICCAT penalties may include reduction in the assigned country catch quota equal to a minimum of 125% of the excess harvest. In addition, trade restrictions may be imposed on countries that fail to restrict catch to the level of the assigned quotas.)

Determining the status of the resource would be less accurate without this information, since approximately 50% of the western Atlantic catch is landed by U.S. fishermen, and the conservation and management objectives of ATCA with respect to the bluefin tuna rebuilding program could be jeopardized. Furthermore, it would be difficult for the United States to formulate domestic policy consistent with the MSFCMA, which must be based on sound socio-economic and biological data and analyses. NMFS would be less able to prepare documents such as the RIR, EIS, etc., as required under the MSFCMA, NEPA, and other applicable laws.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology

NMFS has set up automated systems for both telephone and internet entry of landings reports. These systems key on the Atlantic tunas permit number to link to data already on file and minimize the reporting burden on anglers. Both systems are available on a 7 day/24 hour basis, and are available at no charge to the angler.

Although NMFS has implemented automated systems, NC and MD fishermen and fishery managers have expressed a preference for catch cards, which are collected upon landing. Reporting of BFT landings through catch cards is administered by NC and MD and has the support of the private boat and charter boat fishermen. Other states have expressed an interest in the landing card program, but NMFS has limited staff so a catch card system requires administration by state employees and private sector volunteers (e.g., tackle shops for distribution of tags/cards).

4. Consideration of Other Collections

It is estimated that less than 20% of large pelagics fishing trips land BFT. Additionally, only about 5% of the total estimated number of fishing trips are subject to dockside interviews. Therefore, only a small fraction of those anglers who would fill out a catch card or call in their catch are likely to be contacted during a dockside interview. Thus, duplication of responses would be minimal. A small amount of duplication is, in fact, necessary to monitor compliance and to cross-validate the dockside and telephone reporting systems.

5. Impact and Problems for Small Businesses

Mandatory catch reporting does not have a significant impact on small businesses, organizations or government bodies. The reporting process is expected to include an average burden of only 5 minutes per call-in report and 10 minutes per catch card.

6. Consideration of Less Frequent Reporting

Catch reports are needed on a per trip basis to reduce the potential for recall bias as to the number and size of fish landed and to ensure that there is no “backlog” of unreported landings. If BFT catch information were to be collected less timely than within 24 hours, cumulative figures for quota monitoring would not be up-to-date.

The amount of potential fishing effort for BFT (over 20,000 vessels issued permits) could result in a harvest that far exceeds the available quota (less than 10,000 fish). Overharvest in one year could result in a more severely restricted fishing season in the subsequent year. To avoid overharvest, NMFS must react on a timely basis to lower the trip limit or shorten the fishing season. However, such “inseason” changes do require at least several days advance notice, and one week notice is desirable to effectively communicate with the fleet. Thus, in considering changes to catch limits and season length, NMFS must project catch and effort over the advance notice period. Requiring catch reports within 24 hours facilitates enforcement and enables a more accurate assessment of cumulative landings for the purposes of projections, avoiding forecasting errors to the extent possible.

Although the states submit catch card reports on a weekly basis, the cards themselves are completed immediately after the fishing trip, thus avoiding recall bias and facilitating enforcement. Cumulative data are therefore assembled by the states concurrent with the telephone and internet based reports direct to NMFS.

7. Consistency with OMB Guidelines

Collection of information will be made in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines except that catch reports are required on a frequency basis more often than quarterly (see response to #6). Additionally, reports must be submitted in less than 30 days from the receipt of the reporting requirement (i.e., within 24 hours of landing a BFT). However, practical notification of the 24 hour telephone reporting requirement, or the catch card upon landing, occurs in advance of the fishing season through communications with permit holders.

8. Consultations

NMFS has conducted a number of scoping meetings in Atlantic Coast States to discuss improvements in Highly Migratory Species (HMS) catch monitoring. NMFS has also discussed catch monitoring and compliance with reporting requirements with the HMS Advisory Panel and the ICCAT Advisory Committee. NMFS considered the possibility of many types of reporting systems in anticipation that cooperative efforts with individual states might lead to reporting systems specific to the circumstances in each state. Based on comments received at public hearings, NMFS implemented the call-in system but left the regulations flexible enough so that other systems could be tried in cooperation with individual state programs (refer to attached regulations). Prior to this renewal request, NMFS solicited additional public comment through a Federal Register notice (65 FR 7853, February 16, 2000).

9. Payments to Respondents

The agency does not provide gifts or payment to permit holders upon reporting catch.

10. Confidentiality

There is a PRA statement printed on notification materials (letter to permit holders, publicity posters, catch cards, internet site). It is NOAA policy to preserve the confidentiality of information submitted under this reporting requirement, except that NMFS may release such information in aggregate or summary form, such that individual identifiers are not disclosed (NAO 216-100).

11. Sensitive Questions

No information of a sensitive nature is requested.

12. Annual Burden

NMFS estimates that direct call-in reports take five minutes per permit holder per fish, and that completing a catch card takes ten minutes per permit holder per fish.

The average weights for recreationally landed school, large school/small medium, and large medium/giant BFT are 40, 135, and 415 lbs, respectively. These average weights are based upon recent average sizes from the NMFS Large Pelagic Survey and the NMFS Northeast Region Bluefin Dealer Database, and were used in the analyses in the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks (HMS FMP).

Using the current U.S. landings quota of 1,397 metric tons, the average weights described above, and the domestic allocation percentage shares for the various domestic fishing categories established in the HMS FMP, the annual number of recreationally landed school, large school/small medium, and large medium/giant BFT can be estimated at 6,118, 2,547, and 32, respectively, for a total of 8,697 fish.

The Large Pelagic Survey is used to estimate trips and catches of BFT from Maine south through Virginia. Using the number of trips estimated for each of these states in 1999, a percentage of the total number of recreationally landed BFT was estimated for each state, and this percentage was applied to the annual number of recreationally landed fish estimated above, minus any estimated landings south of Virginia (see below). Table 1 shows estimates of the numbers of recreationally landed BFT by state.

For North Carolina, where a catch card system has been in place for the last several years, the annual number of recreationally landed BFT is estimated at 400, based the last two years of catch card reporting.

For the States of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida (east coast), where recreational retention of non-trophy sized recreationally caught BFT is permitted, there has been only two BFT reported through the direct-call in system over the past two years, one of which was a trophy BFT (>73 inches). Landings may occur in these states, but in very low numbers, and for the purposes of this annual burden estimate, an annual landings estimate of 5 BFT recreationally per state was assumed for these states.

While school, large school, and small medium BFT can not be retained by Angling and Charter/headboat category vessels in the Gulf of Mexico, trophy BFT (large medium or giant) can be retained by vessels fishing in these areas on a one fish per year basis. For Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, there has been only one report of a trophy BFT landed in these states over the last several years. Based on current quotas and landings of trophy BFT in recent years, for the purposes of this annual burden estimate, an estimate of one trophy BFT landed per state was assumed for Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. The recreational landings estimates for ME through FL also include estimates of trophy BFT based on actual reports in recent years.

Using the per fish reporting burden and annual landings estimates above, estimates of the annual reporting burden for both reporting mechanisms (telephone/internet and catch card) for each state along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts are presented in Table 1. The total annual burden estimates for the direct call-in and catch card systems are 725 and 1450 hours, respectively, reporting 8,697 recreationally landed fish.

Table 1. Estimated number of BFT landed in recreational fisheries and burden hour estimates for potential call-in or catch card reporting systems.

State	Estimated Number of Recreationally Landed BFT	Burden hours for call-in system (5 minutes per fish)	Burden hours for catch card system (10 minutes per fish)
ME	175	14.6	29.2
NH	70	5.8	11.6
MA	619	51.6	103.2
RI	371	30.9	61.8
CT	219	18.3	36.6
NY	1,138	94.8	189.6
NJ	2,136	178.0	356.0
DE	808	67.3	134.6
MD	1,549	129.1	258.2
VA	1,193	99.4	198.8

State	Estimated Number of Recreationally Landed BFT	Burden hours for call-in system (5 minutes per fish)	Burden hours for catch card system (10 minutes per fish)
NC	400	33.3	66.6
SC	5	.4	.8
GA	5	.4	.8
FL	5	.4	.8
AL	1	.1	.2
MS	1	.1	.2
LA	1	.1	.2
TX	1	.1	.2
Total	8,697	725	1,450

Based on the expected number of fish landed, the total burden for the automated telephone reporting system would be 725 hours. If all states implemented a landing card system, the burden would increase to 1,450 hours. In recent years, only North Carolina and Maryland have worked with NMFS to implement landing card reporting systems. Based on the estimated burden for the states currently using each system, the total burden requested is 887 hours. However, NMFS requests OMB approval for the substitution of landing cards for states that want to do so. In this way, individual states can work cooperatively with NMFS to select the program that best suits the needs of the state and federal fishery managers, without the delay of obtaining OMB approval on a case by case basis. NMFS will submit a worksheet to OMB to correct the burden estimates, if and when such changes take place for each state.

In addition to the reporting burden on the part of anglers, it is expected that 30 weekly reports (1 hour each) and one annual report (4 hours each) would be submitted by Maryland and North Carolina under the tagging program requirements, for a total of 68 hours.

The total burden for the recreational BFT mandatory landings reporting program is $887 + 68 = 955$ hours.

13. Annual Cost Burden

There are no costs in supplies or materials other than the time burden. Costs to distribute weekly and annual summary reports on the state level tagging programs are covered in the grants to the states as indicated in response # 14.

14. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

The costs associated with the mandatory catch reporting program via the automated system (telephone and internet) have been fully accounted for in the tuna permitting program, and all respondents are permit holders (vessel permits are approved under 0648-0327).

The North Carolina catch card program is carried out by NCDMF in cooperation with NMFS at a cost to the Federal Government of \$30,000 per year. The federal share of the Maryland program is funded at a level of \$10,000 per year. It should be noted, however, that ancillary data may be collected by dockside staff in conjunction with catch cards (e.g., biological sample materials or dockside intercepts approved under 0648-0380), thus these costs are not entirely attributable to landings reports. Similar costs are anticipated for future cooperative catch card programs and the federal share will depend on the amount and type of services contributed by the states.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments

This request reflects a change of +232 hours. About 129 of those hours are for a program change for having Maryland reports done by card rather than phone. The other additional 103 hours reflect adjustments from miscalculations of previous burden and an increase in the number of fish being reported upon.

16. Time Schedule for Tabulation, Publication and Other Actions

Not applicable.

17. Display of Expiration Date for OMB Approval

A PRA burden statement is displayed on NC landing cards, landing report program announcements and posters, and on the internet. However, the MD landing card program is a state regulation and MD anglers are exempt from the federal reporting requirement under 50 CFR 635.5(c), thus the PRA statement was not applicable in 1999. Once OMB approval is obtained for the program change (telephone to catch cards) for Maryland, the burden statement will be printed on the catch cards for that state.

18. Exceptions to Certification in Item 19 of OMB 83-I.

No exceptions are requested.

Section B. Collections Employing Statistical Methods

This collection of information is a census of landings and, therefore, will not employ statistical methods.

The Internet reporting form can be reviewed at
<http://www.nmfspermits.com/permitidlandings.asp>